

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 8, 2010  
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 22, 2010  
CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009–10 REGULAR SESSION

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 144**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Blumenfield  
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Anderson, Feuer, and Ruskin)**

March 10, 2010

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 144—Relative to Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 144, as amended, Blumenfield. Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month.

This measure would proclaim the month of April of each year as Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, During the Second World War, Raphael Lemkin,  
2 a Polish lawyer of Jewish descent, motivated by the attempted  
3 extermination of the Armenian and Assyrian communities during  
4 the First World War, coined the term “genocide” to describe a  
5 coordinated plan of actions aimed at the destruction of essential  
6 foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of  
7 annihilating a group itself, for example, by disintegrating a group’s  
8 political and social institutions, culture, language, national feelings,  
9 religion, and economic existence, and destroying the personal  
10 security, liberty, health, and dignity, and the lives of individuals  
11 belonging to the group; and

1 WHEREAS, Following the Holocaust, on December 9, 1948,  
2 the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 260  
3 (III) A, the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and  
4 Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, declaring genocide to be a  
5 crime under international law, and defining genocide to include  
6 the commission of certain acts, including killing members of the  
7 group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the  
8 group, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring  
9 about a group's physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing  
10 measures intended to prevent births within the group, and forcibly  
11 transferring children of the group to another group, with the intent  
12 to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious  
13 group; and

14 ~~WHEREAS, Existing laws recognize certain genocides,~~  
15 ~~including the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust, and various~~  
16 ~~other genocides have been conducted throughout history, including~~  
17 ~~those in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, Darfur, and in other parts of~~  
18 ~~the world; and~~

19 ~~WHEREAS, Many genocidal acts throughout history have~~  
20 ~~occurred during the month of April. In April 1915, the Turkish~~  
21 ~~government began rounding up leading Armenian religious,~~  
22 ~~political, and intellectual leaders in the capital of Istanbul and~~  
23 ~~murdering them. This pattern was copied across the country,~~  
24 ~~leading to the deaths of more than one million Armenians with the~~  
25 ~~relocation of survivors to the Syrian desert. In April 1933, the~~  
26 ~~Nazis issued a decree preparing the way for the "Final Solution,"~~  
27 ~~in which they defined non-Aryans as "anyone descended from~~  
28 ~~non-Aryan, especially Jewish, parents or grandparents. One parent~~  
29 ~~or grandparent classifies the descendant as non-Aryan ... especially~~  
30 ~~if one parent or grandparent was of the Jewish faith." In April~~  
31 ~~1975, the Khmer Rouge entered the Cambodian capital, Phnom~~  
32 ~~Penh, and initiated massacres that emptied entire cities into "killing~~  
33 ~~fields," leading to the death of some two million people. In April~~  
34 ~~1992, the siege of Sarajevo began, leading to the deaths of more~~  
35 ~~than 2,000 Bosnian Serbs. In April 2004, the Rwandan President's~~  
36 ~~airplane was shot down, leading to the killing of moderate leaders~~  
37 ~~by Hutu hardliners, and in the next three months 800,000 Tutsis~~  
38 ~~were slaughtered. In April 2003, the displacement of Darfurians~~  
39 ~~began in Sudan, leading to hundreds of thousands of deaths and~~  
40 ~~the displacement of millions; and~~

1 WHEREAS, In 2008, the Prevention of Genocide Task Force,  
2 convened by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the  
3 American Academy of Diplomacy, and the United States Institute  
4 of Peace, issued a report finding that in order to prevent future  
5 genocides and mass atrocities, effective prevention measures must  
6 be implemented before a crisis has erupted, and that educating the  
7 public can help to protect individual rights and promote a culture  
8 of lawfulness that will help prevent future genocides; and

9 WHEREAS, The State of California condemns, and desires to  
10 combat, all acts of genocide; and

11 WHEREAS, Educating the public about the evils of genocide  
12 and commemorating victims of genocide, including the adoption  
13 of a Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month, are effective  
14 tools that will further these goals; now, therefore, be it

15 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
16 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby proclaims the  
17 month of April of each year as Genocide Awareness and Prevention  
18 Month; and be it further

19 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
20 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.